

Fisheries Information System (FIS)  
Second Annual Meeting Minutes  
Draft

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Fisheries Information System 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting Minutes

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## **Monday, August 16**

### **Tina Chang, Office of Science and Technology**

Tina briefly welcomed the participants and introduced the first speaker, Dr. Doug DeMaster

### **Doug Demaster, Acting Director, Office of Science and Technology**

Dr. Doug DeMaster thanked everyone for coming to the second national meeting and gave brief welcoming remarks. He emphasized that the FIS is in the NOAA strategic plan, and the importance of data quality and data management to the agency. He stated that FIS identifies major programs to improve data quality and data collection. He noted that the agency will benefit from having FIS implementation plans in its long term mission. Dr. Demaster looks forward to the benefits resulting from the FIS team's efforts to standardize the agency's databases and improve data quality. He wished everyone an enjoyable stay in Seattle.

### **Gary Shaw, the Alaska Fisheries Science Center Office Management IT Director**

Gary Shaw welcomed everybody to the beautiful Alaska Science Center facility for the meeting and spoke to the attendees about the logistics of the meeting and safety issues.

### **Tina Chang, Office of Science and Technology**

Tina provided a short overview of the purpose and goals of the meeting. She went through an overview of the meeting agenda and introduced the binder contents which were then handed out to all attendees. Then she introduced the meeting facilitator, Paul Anninos.

### **Paul Anninos, ICF Consultants (facilitator)**

Paul, who is the senior vice president of ICF Consultants, laid out the meeting ground rules and highlighted his fishery experiences and facilitation background.

### **John Witzig (F/NERO)**

After Tina Chang provided some background information about the FIS Roadmap group and its activities, John Witzig presented the findings of the June Roadmap Planning meeting.

### **Facilitated Discussion of FIS Roadmap**

Eight Discussion Points:

1. What elements are missing?  
Pieces  
Messages  
Explanations
2. Are there elements you disagree with?
3. Are there elements that need more/less detail?
4. Is the roadmap the right metaphor?
5. How should the roadmap be used?

6. Who is the audience and does it connect?
7. How can it be improved?
8. What governance issues must be addressed?

David Hamm posed the question, “What is the definition of need at the national level”? Mike Cahall reiterated that this is the single most important question that needed to be addressed. There was some discussion as to whether “National Need” referred to HQ, Congressional needs, etc. Susan Molina responded that this same question was asked a year ago at the November FIS meeting, and asked why these questions had not been answered by now. Dave Donaldson responded that there has been no roadmap or committee to address these questions. He also responded that regional needs would help drive national needs. Susan responded that FIS suffers from a lack of governance, and that PSGs are not functioning as steering committees.

In response to the discussion of national needs, Mike Cahall responded that there is often an interaction among state and national needs, which complicates the definition of “National Need”. Dave Donaldson responded that regional needs drive national needs, and that the national issue is too large to get a handle on. Reggie Howe suggested that the lack of commonness among regional data collection systems is confusing for data users. A similar look and feel would help develop confidence among the public.

William Daspit posed a question regarding the need for interaction among regional management groups. It was explained that integration among regions will allow for coordination among similar Fishery Management Plans. For example, new FMPs in the Atlantic can be informed by experiences elsewhere. John Witzig responded that permitted dealers in different regions report to the Northeast Regional Office.

William Daspit asked, “What is the interaction among regions”? And “Does SW really need to know what NE are doing?” Pat Donley replied yes. For example, if NE had already done some work on HMS, SW would like to know about it and they would not want to reinvent the wheel. SW would like to use what had already done and use the existing information as much as possible. Some other attendees indicated that interaction among regional offices were important. William asked: should we be integrating data, methods, or both? It was suggested that we should be integrating both. Why reinvent the wheel for different locations? John Witzig explained that there is already considerable sharing of resources between the NE and SE. There may be less immediate need for SW/NW integration.

William Daspit asked what offices in NMFS are responsible for fisheries management. Steve Freese responded that all offices are somewhat responsible, but the Office of Sustainable Fisheries is the lead office. The Office of Science and Technology provides support for management, and the Office of Protected Resources and the Office of Habitat Conservation handle issues pertaining to the Endangered Species Act. The regional offices are responsible for regional management. Cahall responded that regional commissions and state agencies are also involved in management. William Daspit explained that management responsibility is primarily regional, and asked how HQ fits in.

Gail Smith asked who our customers are. Mike Cahall responded that it is up to us to define the customer. Current issues define the customer.

Pat Donley mentioned that all of these questions are driven by fear that misinformation will be put out. There is a fear of data misuse. In response, Paul Anninos asked what the different regions are currently experiencing. Russel Porter responded that there may not be a national need. FIS may assist with regional needs. Dave Colpo suggested that PacFIN was created to solve a problem, while FIS may be a solution looking for a problem. He further suggested that there may not be many connections across the country, and he believes that “National” refers to HQ in the case of FIS. Dave Donaldson reported that he hasn’t heard of misuses in the Gulf of Mexico. He also expressed that fear of misuse should prevent FIS from moving forward. Cahall reported no known misuse of data on the Atlantic Coast.

Jim Kinane suggested changing “National” to “aggregate”, and provided an accounting analogy. Standardizing methodology allows for aggregation at the national level. Currently, there are disjointed methodologies. He also suggested that FIS is not trying to take the decision making process away from the regions.

Steve Freese suggested that IT staff has revived FIS, indicating a regime change since the 1998 report to Congress. Susan Molina responded that IT identified a need to share information, and recognized the benefit of learning from experiences in other regions. Mike Cahall agreed that there has been a regime change, and indicated that previously subject specialists developed systems. Currently, information system specialists are developing systems with input from subject specialists.

Joe Hudicka pointed out that many of the questions raised were initially posed in the 1998 report to Congress. In the Executive Summary, second paragraph, a lot of questions were asked. Have these questions been addressed previously? Which questions can be addressed at the regional level? Paul Anninos asked everyone to think about if the needs for data defined in the blue book have been changed since 1998, non-IT needs. A quick survey was done to determine how many people have actually read the blue book? Only about a dozen people raised their hands. Another question was posed: How many people have read the book in the last year? A few hands dropped. David Hamm reiterated that the report to congress was six years ago. Are we still trying to address the same questions?

The three page Executive Summary of the blue book was copied and distributed to all attendees. Paul asked everyone to take a few minutes to read the document. He then asked everyone to think about whether things have changed since the document was written. Have any of these questions been answered? If the questions have not been answered over the six-year period, what does it mean? Does it mean that the requirements have not been addressed with all of regional activities, then, does this mean that the questions are at national level?

Steve Koplin stated that there were national needs. We were very often asked by the Coast Guard questions like these: How many vessels out there? How many people are fishing? And where?

Paul asked whether it was possible that questions that were asked could not be answered at the regional level? The answer was yes. It was stated that it might be the time that regions should also look into these questions and try to answer them. Maybe it would be good to address the standardization issues now at the national level? Pat stated that a lot of these questions also

needed to be answered on a real time basis. Mike Cahall commented that the national standards would help to drive funds and resources.

Paul Anninos outlined **the three design elements of FIS that was addressed in the Report To Congress:**

1. Leverage existing systems (FINs, ACCSP, etc.)
2. Adopt standard practices, methods, coding, and systems
3. Reduce burden on providers of information

Paul Anninos asked if accomplishing these tasks would provide a useful product. Mike Cahall responded that it already is with the FINs.

Paul Anninos asked, “How much longer do we have to discuss what FIS is? When can we be comfortable with moving forward”? Pat Donley suggested that lack of funding has been a major obstacle to carrying out FIS. Paul suggested that we move to the next level instead of asking the same questions over and over again.

*Questions:* What Governance issues must be addressed?

There was a discussion about what system needs to be in place to institute FIS. Jim Kinane suggested that we roll out the roadmap. Will Daspit asked if there would be a need for governance if the roadmap were rolled out. Mike Cahall suggested that funding issues would necessitate the need for a governance body.

In response to the burden requirements of FIS (point 3 above), David Hamm suggested that we have to collect more and more data than ever before. Dave Van Voorhees clarified that the original intent of FIS was to “eliminate unnecessary burden”. Jim Kinane suggested that technology, specifically electronic data capture, will help reduce burden.

Paul Anninos suggested that the FIS governance system should be an adaptive system. Do we currently have a governance system in place to carry out FIS? Dave Van Voorhees responded that we do not, and the HQ wants a collective management process. Because HQ answers to Congress, it would provide a leadership role. Reggie Howe suggested that we need leadership to advance the FIS cause. Mike Cahall suggested we move forward to establish FIS governance.

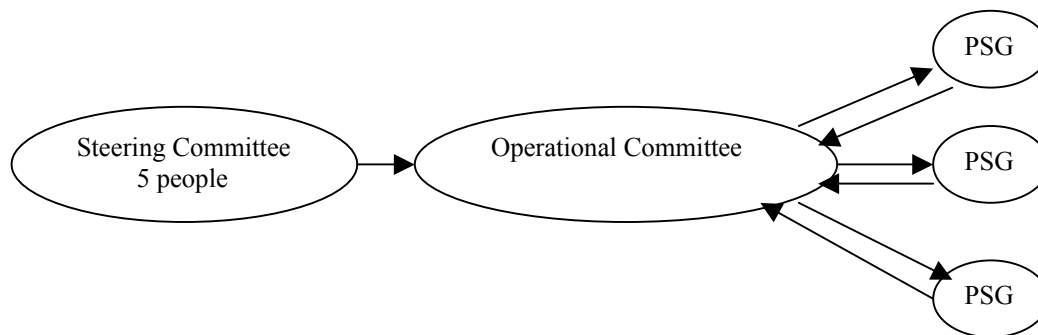
In reference to the FIS design elements, Gail Smith asked for clarification of “standard practices” (point 2 above). She suggested that some things are reasonable to standardize at the national level, but in some cases regional differences dictate practices. Therefore, it may not be practicable to standardize, and doing so may remove autonomy from the regions.

Paul Anninos asked if there was a desire to identify a governance structure. Teresa Turk suggested that we develop a list of funding priorities, otherwise the budget will be split equally among regions. Reggie Howe commented that this question (governance structure) should be addressed before we move forward. Mukhya Khalsa suggested that we need user input to define a governance structure. Susan Molina recommended we model the structure after a successful program such as ACCSP. Dave Van Voorhees outlined a structure that has been considered that consists of a steering committee occupied by upper-level management, an operations-level committee that would establish priorities, and technical committees (PSG-like) that would work with the ops committee. A project manager would be hired to be a conduit between the groups.

Mike Cahall outlined the ACCSP governance structure. Tina Chang recommended that FIS modify this and other existing models to fit FIS's needs. She thought that we might not have enough time for FY05, but should work on future proposals and projects.

Susan Molina suggested that we see what's out there so we can benefit from previous work. Will Daspit outlined the approach taken by the Pacific Coast Fisheries Data Committee. David Hamm suggested we take a regional approach, governed by standard national objectives. Dave Donaldson questioned how we develop priorities. Paul Anninos responded that the governance group develops the priorities.

Tina recommended forming an adhoc committee to discuss the Governance issue for the FIS. A group consisting of Pat Donley, Mike Cahall, Dave Ackley, Reggie Howe, Karen Sender, John Witzig, Dave Van Voorhees, Susan Molina, Tina Chang, Steve Freese, Dave Colpo, and Galen Tromble (joint on Wed.) was established to further discuss governance issues, with the following model structured after the ACCSP governance as a starting point



**Tuesday, August 17**

**Usha Varanasi, Director, Northwest Fisheries Science Center**

Usha gave a warm welcome to attendees. She emphasized that the group was doing a very important thing for the agency. She talked about how important quality data was to the agency. She talked about the complexity of data and the importance of making data available in a timely manner, and addressed data harmonization across regions. She recognized the FIS team's hard work and encouraged the team to work together for success. She made the following points, using anadromous species as an example of data complexity.

1. For reasonable assessments of ecosystems to be possible, data that crosses regulatory agencies and regions is needed. This data is presently difficult to retrieve
2. Data may be misused, but to be valuable it must be accessible.
3. Accessibility is a principal weakness within NOAA.
4. Regional vs National data needs present a natural area of conflict. Resolution is possible by the FIS and through the people attending this conference.

**Day One Recap from Paul Anninos**

1. Focus on Roadmap
2. Revisited report to congress (Bluebook)
3. Discussed design principals
4. Utilize existing programs
5. Identify governance process
6. Improvements to roadmap
7. Identification of users

**FIS Program Directions - Dave Van Voorhees**

Dave Van Voorhees presented the FIS Program directions. This presentation gave a broader view of the overall program and how it fit in with the NOAA Strategic Plan and Ecosystem Mission and Goal.

John Poffenberger requested to see a listing of current FMP's (44). He expressed surprise that NMFS is not meeting performance measures for a higher number of FMPs (currently 16). Dave Van Voorhees explained that we need input from partners to more accurately determine the number of current FMPs. He also mentioned that NOAA performance measures have funding implications.

In response to the number of FTEs currently working on FIS (115), Ken Ortiz asked what disciplines these FTEs encompass, and if they are devoted solely to FIS. Dave Van Voorhees responded that this is the number of FTEs supported by base fish statistics and all groundfish monitoring.

Steve Freese suggested that FIS needs funding increases. We are spending too many resources planning a limited FIS budget (2.5 mil).

A question was raised pertaining to performance measures. It appears that the Magnuson Act drives them. Is there room to consider issues not covered by FMPs (eg. Salmon)? Dave Van Voorhees responded that performance measures do not preclude these issues, but we need to think about how to include them.

## **Progress and Accomplishments - Tina Chang**

Tina presented the team with FY04 FIS accomplishments and status. She summarized the overall progress, successes, and status of the project. She thanked everyone for their commitment and dedication, especially the Pacific Island and SE teams for developing the FIS national metadata and FIS portal prototype demos in such a short time. Tina also thanked the Roadmap Team for their hard work in putting the strawman together for this meeting, and also the whole PSG teams' commitment for working on the FY04 projects, proposals, and FIS activities. In her presentation, she also talked about next steps and urged everyone to continue to participate and make the program move forward.

Steve Freese asked how often HQ is asked to update FIS progress. Tina responded that initially we were only required to report annually to OMB. However, NOAA CIO recently instituted a policy requiring periodic reviews as well as reporting of problems.

## **FY04 Project Demonstrations**

### **InPort – The FIS Metadata Catalog - Karen Sender**

In her presentation Karen Sender talked about how the FIS InPort Metadata Catalog should give NOAA Fisheries and its state and regional partners the capability to share essential information about fisheries-dependent data. She described the InPort (*Information Portal*), which was one of the initial, bootstrap systems planned by FIS to give NOAA Fisheries and its partners the capability to catalog and search on Fisheries data holdings. Janet Pappas and Karen demonstrated the tool and its capability for managing information about our organization, projects, data, publications and information products such as maps and reports. Two very key capabilities that InPort can provide are: (1) To share information across regions and NOAA Fisheries and (2) to search and study a repository of cross-regional information for use in fisheries science, management, and regulation.

It was requested that the URL for InPort be posted. Al Coan asked if InPort was developed with input from all regions. Karen responded that it was to the extent that funding came through FIS. It was asked if InPort addressed the needs of FIS. Karen responded that 3-weeks had been spent researching the strategic plan.

### **National FIS Portal System Overview - Susan Molina**

Portal technology is ideally suited to integrate a variety of fisheries information, data collection programs, reports, and technologies quickly and effectively. It also enables customers to personalize their web experience by allowing them to target relevant content. In Susan's presentation, she demonstrated some features and how portal technology would support projects like FIS.

Can Portal tie into Inport? Susan responded that yes, it can. A question was asked concerning the cost of Portal. Susan responded that we are currently partnered with the MBII (USGS) database, so there is very little cost. We don't have to own the software. Cost would go up if we decided to venture out alone.

### **Standard Atlantic Fisheries Information System – SAFIS - Mike Cahall, Reggie Howe, Joan Palmer**

This was a demonstration of cross-agency project. Working together, the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP), NOAA Fisheries Northeast Regional Office (NERO),

Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) and Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MA DEP) created a powerful comprehensive tool that collects trip level dealer reports across multiple State and Federal jurisdictions.

Using the ACCSP standards as a model, a dealer reporting tool has been built and deployed using resources of NOAA Fisheries, the ACCSP and the MA DEP. Each group has been responsible for a different aspect of systems development and support.

The collaboration has resulted in a far more powerful system than any one group could have created independently. ACCSP is developing and maintaining entry and update forms and hosts the system. The NERO provides development on ancillary maintenance and update forms and system level procedures. NEFSC developed and maintains a flexible file upload system, hosted by the ACCSP, which converts dealer output files to a common transfer format and uploads the data into the SAFIS system. MA DEP is building a registration tracking system to match dealers, fishermen and vessels across jurisdictions so that only a single, unified record exists for each individual and vessel with cross references to state and federal licenses and permits.

It was asked if dealers were happy with SAFIS. The response was that clients ought to improve hardware. A question was asked regarding response time. There are performance issues. The system was built under the assumption of a high performance environment. SAFIS is a mandatory requirement; there is no paper option. States have agreed to accept SAFIS data. If the SAFIS network is down, then SAFIS is down. There is no backup alternative. There currently is no enforcement requirement.

### **Estimation of Angler Effort in Puget Sound (Jennifer Cahalan)**

Jennifer Cahalan from WDFW presented how some efforts were spent on a new phone survey implemented to collect data used to estimate the total number of angler trips taken in Puget Sound, Washington. This survey takes advantage of the WILD (Washington Interactive Licensing Database) system which obtains (electronically) the angler contact information (name, address, phone number) for each licensed angler at the license point of-sale.

### **Discussion of FIS Progress and Example Projects**

Some discussions on FY04 program progress were conducted by Paul and there were some points made by attendees:

1. Need to identify multiple business processes first
2. Hurdles: Unrealistic timelines
3. Lessons Learned: Collaboration – fighting for same money to do the same project. Collaboration overcomes this hurdle.

### **Presentations from Partners**

#### **ACCSP - Mike Cahall**

Mike Cahall talked about how ACCSP was initially focused on getting standards and systems in place to guide comprehensive collection of commercial catch and effort data (dealer reports and/or vessel trip reports) for the first several years. ACCSP's new initiatives are under way to collaboratively set coast-wide biological sampling targets and track both the targets and progress towards meeting them. He also talked about better access to MRFSS data using the ACCSP flexible user interface.

*Comments*

It took about a year to develop the definition of a trip. There are both vessel Ids and individual Ids. Both are captured as a result of the potential for ITQ's (at individual level). There has been considerable collaboration between ACCSP and FIN – same standards and coding schemes. Electronic reporting is password protected.

**FIN - Dave Donaldson**

Dave provided a basic overview of the GulfFIN program, outlining the program's mandate, goals, organizational structure, and recent activities.

*Comments*

Have discussed the possibility of using SSNs to create unique identifier. Got preliminary OK from NOAA General Council, but there still may be legal hurdles. The use of e-ticketed information provides a benefit to dealers. It provides them with the ability to track payments, etc. There have currently been no complaints from independent software dealers who provide dealers with similar types of products.

Dealers say what they bought and how much. Dealers can use the trip ticket system to print a check after fishermen deductions. Gives an incentive to use the system.

Need to make sure vendors don't tell dealers that their software system has been approved for use by NMFS.

**AKFIN - Dave Colpo**

Dave Colpo spoke about the AKFIN program and briefed the group on the history of AKFIN. He stated that the goal of AKFIN was to create a comprehensive data structure to validate data, and make it available to users. He talked about the new dimensional database system which was addressing the performance, scalability, and no constraint-based database system design.

*Questions*

What is the data architecture technical backend?

*Answer:* This is an Oracle based tool.

*Comments*

Conceptual data management technique.

State data can't come to AKFIN because of data confidentiality issues from Alaska state laws. Strictly commercial data presently.

**PacFIN - William Daspit**

William briefly discussed the Pacific Coast Fisheries Data Committee (PCFDC), including charter, membership, and relationship to the Pacific Fisheries Information Network (PacFIN), and discussed PacFIN data sources, contents of the PacFIN central database, the frequency of datafeeds, and a few of the most important subsystems. Contents of a few of the data tables including those specifically developed and maintained for the NMFS/ST1 were discussed.

*Questions*

How is it ensured that there are official representatives assigned to the PCFD team?

How is data given out based on a request?

A - Only non-confidential data is given out.

Where do quota-monitoring reports come from?

A – Quota monitoring reports come from weekly reports, biological estimates and trip ticket data. Summations of the two are provided. Trip ticket data goes in monthly.

What is the frequency of reporting from the various states?

#### *Comments*

Logbook data comes from the states.

There is a list of confidential users of the data. Still follow NOAA rules. Fed, state and contractors have access to data as do stock assessment personnel.

#### *Actions*

Workshop to address 1994 confidentiality document.

#### **RecFIN - Russel Porter**

Russel talked about the RecFIN and provided a review of this coast-wide marine recreational database on the Pacific Coast for marine recreational fisheries catch and effort which began in 1993. He talked about the database usage, type of data collected, and methods used for database integration.

*Questions:* Effort estimates are determined by boat counts. How do you determine if boats are fishing or not?

*Answer:* Fishing efforts determined by surveys.

*Question:* Anglers require licenses in 3 states. How is the number of fishermen calculated to figure catch effort?

*Answer:* Exit counts are heavily relied on for data.

#### *Comments*

License frame survey does not provide estimates at the time-frame required for in-season management.

#### **WestPacFIN - David Hamm**

Dave Hamm presented the WPacFIN system. He discussed the drivers, goals, and challenges of the system. He also addressed the uniqueness of the WPacFIN, the differences between WPacFIN and other FINs. He emphasized how important data quality was and also addressed how WPacFIN will support the recent emphasis on ecosystem management.

*Questions:* What is covered in the ecosystem plan?

*Answer:* The first annual ecosystem plan hasn't come out yet. Trophic level interactions are being looked at. Talk about cross species problems being encountered.

*Question:* Are there any fishing regulations?

*Answer:* There are fishing regulations in all areas. New regulations are coming along in all areas and they are getting more proactive.

Individual states have limits, they don't all require licenses.

License requirements for commercial fishermen in HI are mandatory and reporting is required. Dealer reporting is also mandatory in HI. American Samoa dealers report, everything else is voluntary.

#### **Fisheries Scientific Computing System – FSCS - Teresa Turk**

Teresa briefed the group on the history of the Fisheries Science Computer System (FSCS) program and talked about recent initiative of the program.

*Questions:* Is software available to NMFS?

*Answer:* Software is available to NMFS and other agencies.

*Questions:* Can other people participate?

*Answer:* Other people can participate.

*Questions:* Can electronic samplers be given to port agents?

*Answer:* Port samples and states can also use software if they don't have electronic equipment to measure. Can do manual entry.

**Wednesday, August 18**

## **FIS Business Presentations**

### **1. Advantages of FIS - Al Coan**

Al described how the SWFSC and SWR has taken advantage of existing technology, identified by FIS, to more efficiently meet increasing demands for data base technology. He discussed the two projects identified (FIS permits system and longline observer data base) and progress to date is reviewed, and also, the SWFSC has, with the help of FIS, started to load legacy data into a Highly Migratory Species (HMS) enterprise data base model.

It was asked if datasets and models are currently available online. They are not online, but can be provided. Similar work is being done in the SE. A question was asked regarding the external review process. It was reviewed by Tina Chang and her team; mainly IT review. A question was asked regarding incorporation of an observer database. This will require some shuffling.

### **2. Cooperative Interagency Electronic Fishery Information Collection in AK - Gail Smith and David Ackley**

This was another example of a cross-agency program. Gail and Dave provided an overview of the ongoing development of the Cooperative Interagency Electronic Fishery Information Collection Program in Alaska. This presentation was focused on the interagency program structure and the development strategies to implement this program within an unyielding production deadline.

No questions or comments

### **3. Data Quality Act - Tom Gleason**

Tom Gleason discussed integration of Data Quality Act (DQA) compliance into the FIS project. DQA concerns should be addressed now during the planning stages of this project. Some of the challenges to be addressed include ensuring that third party data conforms to NOAA's Information Quality Guidelines, making FIS information products "transparent" through the use of metadata records, and developing a rational plan for predissemination review of FIS information products. Tom also talked about some of the FIS DQA issues.

*Questions:* In the AK office, pre-dissemination review forms (PDRFs) are being completed prior to the release of information products. Should these PDRFs be kept for a certain timeframe? Is there a record retention schedule?

Regarding the reproducibility requirement in the NOAA Information Quality Guidelines, are records supposed to be kept to the smallest detail level, e.g., every time data is updated in a database?

*Answer:* We need to be able to explain changes to data, but there's no need to complete a PDRF every time data is added to a database (or updated) as long as a PDRF is completed initially for the database as a whole and updated periodically.

#### *Comments*

FSCS, maintains histories of all changes to the system. Metadata records can be helpful for tracking such changes.

#### **4. Fisheries Management from the Alaska Perspective - Mary Furuness**

In her presentation, Mary discussed in-season management. It oversaw more than 500 separate groundfish quotas and prohibited species catch limits that result in an annual harvest of 4.7 billion pounds of groundfish taken by approximately 2,000 vessels. About 100 actions either opening or closing fisheries occur annually. The catch accounting system supports monitoring of quotas and prohibited species limits using observer reports, weekly production reports, and shore side landing reports.

Management is very dynamic. A question was asked about the technological capabilities of small boats. Not sure. How is VMS used? Location only.

##### *Comments*

NPFMC, amendment 80 to Bering Sea. Lots of changes. Programs coming from high level with short implementation times.

#### **5. The Alaska Observer Program - Martin Loefflad**

Martin talked about the North Pacific Groundfish Observer Program and how it supported a large component of the fishery-dependent information needs of NMFS, and others, in the Alaska Region. His presentation briefly covered the history of the program, identified funding sources, outlined overall goals, specified what the program does to achieve those goals, identified the program's chief constituents and partners, and identified challenges for the future. Approaches taken, and lessons learned, may be applicable to other regions of NMFS.

A question was asked regarding the effect of industry-funded observers on data quality. A conflict does exist, but it is not thought to be pervasive. Most observers do their jobs very well. A question was asked about observer turnover rate. Most people work more than one trip. Most people rotate out after 1-2 years. A question was asked about industry cooperation. Industry recognizes the need for management. Are smaller vessels that require 30% monitoring harder to monitor? Is cooperation the same? There are some compliance and enforcement issues with these vessels. What happens with observed illegal activity? Observers document activity and inform the master of the vessel of that activity.

#### **6. FIS: A National Perspective - Steve Koplín**

Steve presented the national needs of FIS. He discussed what was required by the Fisheries Information System to meet national needs. He described the types of reports that headquarters produces or is involved in. The presentation provided a background on the various public data requests, ad hoc reports, and data calls from other agencies. Steve also gave some examples of questions that HQ has been asked that the current programs or offices would not have direct answers for.

##### *Questions:*

Information is disseminated that is collected by someone else, how do you comply with DQA? A definition of the FIS system is a collection of information systems and processes going into some sort of HQ system. Will the things HQ needs be built into the sending organization's systems?

The agency is about managing fisheries, not other things. How does the field design a system for the other things HQ needs?

SIS, what does it entail?

*Comments*

Most information that has been collected for dissemination has already passed through some form of QA/QC check from the sending organization, i.e.; commercial landings data. Other data go back and forth with the sending organization. Data is also reviewed for potential problems. There are rational questions from HQ that will never change. Irrational questions from HQ cannot be defined to sending organizations. There are many other impacts on the industry that aren't part of regulatory writing.

SIS is an Oracle based system that ties in stock and species information by FMP. It tracks if it is a major or minor fishery and if it is overfished. Fishing mortality statistics are also tracked.

## **7. The Business Purpose of FIS - Galen Tromble, Chief, NMFS Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Domestic Fisheries Division**

Galen's presentation was on the business purpose of FIS. He talked about how business needs should be met in the FIS implementation. He described how data and information about the fishery and its participants were essential to sound management and effective regulation of U.S. fisheries. Legitimate and important business purposes for information exist at all levels of the agency. Deficiencies in fishery information are easy to identify, but hard to fix. Efforts to improve the system required a clear vision of the end goal and a long-term perspective and commitment. He emphasized that understanding the business purposes of fishery data and information is essential to implementing an effective FIS.

*Questions:* What will the brain drain impact be on FIS over the next few years?

*Answer:* There will be a big impact over the next few years.

*Questions:* Will there be a contraction of duties for the organization over the next few years?

*Answer:* There will be no contraction of duties, there is a Big Ocean bill in Congress.

*Questions:* Ecosystem Management is the latest buzzword, how will data collections be adapted to accommodate?

*Answer:* The way we generally regulate is by FMPs and amendments. This is a huge impediment to putting change in across the country. We either need to change the CFR or figure out how to tweak 46 FMPs to change reporting requirements. Every region and center has a representative on an HQ group to figure out Ecosystem Management. Talk to them at the office about ideas for enacting change.

*Questions:* MSA will be reauthorized in 2005, but will it address Ecosystem Management?

*Comments*

MSA is species-level driven, Ecosystem Management is a higher level of management.

All other impacts outside fisheries need to be addressed in Ecosystem Management.

FIS needs to be highlighted to users to better understand users needs. The users need to come to the producers to relay what information it is they need to collect. Impacts on data collection efforts need to be identified. The collectors and users of the data can address the reality of the impacts on data collection programs.

## **Discussion of Presentations**

Will Dasptit discussed the difference between regular, standardized data requests and research-type requests. The later are often more complicated, and time consuming to process. Suggests that FIS should focus on things that can be automated (non-research requests).

Teresa Turk discussed the development of a tool for standard by-catch reporting. David Hamm suggested that such a tool would have to be developed fishery by fishery and gear type by gear type. Teresa Turk agreed that this would be a difficult task, but suggested it would be a way to generate money.

Steve Koplin asked how many systems currently can talk to each other. Removing regulatory constraints, how many platforms could communicate to produce a query? He suggested there are currently too many standards to accomplish this. FIS needs one standard. Jessica Gharrett suggested that very few queries are as simple as the sound. Obstacles are often the result of how programs are administered, not just how data is organized.

Doug Turnbull suggested that creating a centralized metadata repository moves toward the goal of answering simple/complex questions. Such a system is fundamental to data transfer. Reggie Howe suggested that there is no way to utilize other's experiences to help develop systems. FIS should develop a process for building systems. Jan Pappas agreed that there are currently no project development guidelines, and that there needs to be some commonness within the agency. Will Daspit suggested that metadata will move project developers towards a common answer. Metadata will provide information exchange on the development process.

Glenn Taylor mentioned that there is no full and open communication among HQ, the regions and science centers. Tina Chang suggested that two-way communication is necessary to build a cross-port system.

Jim Kinane asked if HQ could support the aggregate data from the centers and regions.

Jessica Gharrett suggested that entities within a region have similar issues and needs. Dialog among entities has allowed for the formation of common, working definitions. But are there standards, best practices, or national definitions? This is what we need. Mike Cahall mentioned that it took ACCSP and FIN seven years to develop standards. Dave Donaldson suggested that FIN/ACCSP is a good starting point, and that we must learn from their examples and move on.

Dave Van Voorhees mentioned that NMFS has a fair number of documents on how it does management and stock assessment, but nothing on fish statistics.

Jan Pappas mentioned that they didn't even know ACCSP existed. They found it on the web.

Susan Molina asked if other FINS have definitions and standards. Will Daspit stated that PacFIN was built on state programs. In the Atlantic, state programs evolved from FIN, so the standards and definitions were already in place. In the Pacific, some codes are standardized among states. Will Daspit stated that programs to translate different coding systems are more important and useful than a set of standardized codes.

Galen Tromble mentioned that it is a misnomer that FIS is a computer system at HQ. Steve Koplin reiterated that the concept of FIS was always based on distributed, rather than centralized processing.

People want to release quality data. This needs to be coordinated on a national level to get quality answers.

If there is information coming out for a data request, there isn't much follow-up discussion on what is needed, why it is needed and how the request should be performed.

There is a need for information on all species. Awareness is growing that not all systems are broad enough to collect data on everything that is needed. That level of detail will be needed in the FIS system.

PacRecFIN gets data from the states. NMFS needs that level of detail (rockfish data).

Data requests can be divided into 2 categories:

1. Standard requests - things that can be automated.
2. Research – there is not a ready answer. There will always be something that needs to be researched and that will take a while to get. Need to focus on the things that can be automated.

The by-catch request that came from Congress in 1996 was a hint that Congress wants an overall dataset. A standard by-catch reporting tool is difficult to do because of the fishery-by-fishery implications.

Stovepipes should be reinforcing goals of FIS.

Some questions that seem simple are not really simple when they are investigated (i.e.; permits) systems are built for decisions at the local level.

In the FIS booklet there are activities the FIS Planning Team has identified for various systems of Metadata surrounding systems. Store this data in a centralized location. This will enable national data queries. Lead to data management and information exchange.

When systems are developed there should be leverage off of other activities performed in the past.

Design program management structure for project management and systems development.

Leverage off past activities.

No forums for information exchange amongst the regions for systems developers and programmers. Programming standards shared across regions would eliminate duplication of efforts.

It took 7 years for ACCSP and GulFIN to agree on what a trip is, fish measurements, etc. We need to come to consensus on what standards are going to be. Leverage off standards that exist rather than reinvent the wheel.

PIFSC utilized ACCSP standards after stumbling across them on the web.

Cultures of fisheries collections are very different from coast to coast.

Refer to PacFIN examples of how standardization took place across CA, WA and OR.

FIS is a system of systems at the regional level that could lead to a national tool someday.

FIS is not just a computer system at HQ, but a balance between centralized systems and regional systems.

#### *Questions:*

There was a discussion of ecosystem management. David Hamm suggested FIS tap into PPBES. Mark McDuff (???) suggested ecosystem management requires that we think outside fishery dependent data. Steve Freese suggested we form an ecosystem management PSG

### **Proposal Evaluation Process**

Criteria for the selection process as well as scoring criteria were discussed

### **Group Exercise**

1. Principles or characteristics of a process that should be in place
2. Define set of weighted criteria to measure against the projects
3. Define business rules to apply to the criteria

#### *Comments*

Strategic decisions made up front to control funding distribution.

Scorecards from 2003 project reviews are on FIS website.

Initial review of the projects by the PSGs seems to show a fair amount of redundancy in proposals.

2003 funding allocated to projects aligned with a PSG and the PSG ran the project. The system was designed to be a collaborative process.

Trigger Question “In the context of FIS goals and objectives, creating an action agenda and having a mandate to optimize scarce resources...”

#### **A. What should be the characteristics of a credible, successful “proposal evaluation / project selection” process?**

Characteristics of project selection process:

1. Cost effective
2. Only successful projects are funded
3. Benefit multiple partners
4. Address resolving important deficiencies in REGIONAL DATA systems
5. How much it contributes to improvement of current system
6. Transparent
7. How it fulfills FIS goals
8. Openness
9. Reviewed by each PSG to avoid redundant efforts, to promote consolidation
10. Extend our knowledge to new and existing technologies
11. Get the right selections made
12. Clear calendar / schedule of events
13. Proposal format
14. Steering committee reviews
15. Appeal / arbitration process
16. Clear instructions
17. Sufficient time to prepare a proposal
18. Partitioning available funds for funding categories, infrastructure, etc.
19. Need psychic
20. Multiple reviewers
21. Need list of weighted rating factors, including clear explanation
22. Ensuring we’re meeting mandates of MSA
23. Need enough criteria to be able to distinguish between projects
24. Provide feedback
25. To be strategic to established problems
26. Look at order of precedence
27. Gain consensus on what criteria will be
28. Multi-functional composition of selection board, including geographic distribution
29. Must be able to fit in scope of FIS enterprise architecture

30. Every proposal should have metric for success
31. PSG groups should find outside review group
32. Well defined project results and deliverables
33. Assists in writing of effective proposal
34. Totally impartial
35. Avoid conflict of interest, don't rate own proposals
36. Helpful to know how much funding is available
37. Helpful to know any established priorities and needs
38. Clear timeline from RFP to funding date
39. All regions are created equal
40. Clear instructions on whether multi-year projects can be funded
41. Contingency plan
42. Have process for phasing out unsuccessful projects
43. Requirements for mid-projects reviews
44. Set up review panel with FACA in mind
45. Keep the process as simple as possible
46. Clearly defined rating system (like 21)
47. Only 1 attorney involved
48. Be able to "harvest" unused funds from killed projects
49. Have ability to roll over funds for projects that didn't start on time
50. Identify non-FIS funded projects to get big picture of total effort
51. Consideration of in-kind resource contributions (\$\$ FTE)

**B. What criteria should be considered in selecting the "best" and "best mix" of projects to be implemented?**

**Criteria for project selection:**

1. Replacement of legacy systems
2. High potential for leveraging
3. Time sensitivity
4. Pre-requisite for another project
5. Demonstrated relationship with another project idea
6. Improves data quality that address the most critical data needs
7. Cost
8. Will Bill Hogarth like it
9. Solve some business need of the agency
10. Response to agency directive (blue book requirement)
11. See question 1 #5
12. Addresses meeting specific FMP data requirements
13. Degree to which it addresses established goals and priorities
14. Where appropriate is it scaleable
15. Has realistic goals
16. Provide early success for FIS quick payback
17. Is it a cross agency project
18. Technology compatible with existing FIS systems
19. Does it move us along the roadmap
20. Qualifications of the principle investigator (project manager)
21. Dependencies considered
22. A like priority to this meeting , regional and national needs

23. Promote collaboration with industry users
24. Identified strategies to encourage collaboration
25. Demonstrable return on investment
26. Where requests are the same, must be reusable by all parties
27. Is there a deliverable Congress is looking for
28. Meets our current mandates, not just IT needs
29. Resource availability to perform project (people, equip., software on hand)
30. Defined project management
31. Promotes standardization
32. 1,3,4,5,7,32,41 from question 1
33. Is project proposal responsive to solicitation
34. Completeness of plan to communicate / disseminate project results
35. Risk
36. Clear deliverable and timeline
37. How closely are the project design elements aligned with FIS
38. Does not duplicate other projects
39. Realistic potential for success
40. Does it leverage existing projects

***Action***

Boil down the lists to a half dozen substantive questions

## Thursday, August 19

### Roadmap Recap - John Witzig

John Witzig presented the FIS Roadmap short term objectives to the group since there was not enough time on the first day to go through such details. This would help the group to understand immediate next steps of the program.

It was mentioned that the goals of the roadmap are well defined, and the deliverables are reasonable. It was asked if it is a given that FIS will be based on an Oracle platform. It is not necessarily cost effective. Are there any alternatives? The response was that this is not a given, though we currently have a large investment in Oracle. Mike Cahall pointed out that there is nothing out there that can do what Oracle can do. It was mentioned that we are not very efficient in our use of Oracle. We need to be smarter in how we use it.

### *Questions*

Seems a given that NMFS will use Oracle, is that a given?

A – Have an inventory of Oracle, need to inventory what is out there. Nothing out there can do what Oracle can do as a back end database.

Is the data collection PSG a good idea?

Document policy and procedure to set up a structure that will allow future input of data into a synchronized system that is standardized?

A – SDI PSG is addressing this issue

### *Comments*

Many Oracle enterprise databases out there. We need to be smarter in how we use the databases. We have to design good data management practices. We have already paid the bulk of the money for systems.

This all goes back to governance issue.

CIO's office may direct what to use. Need to stress what technology is being used and why.

Look for the right technology for the right type of jobs.

Get FIS goals approved by senior leadership and allow us to work and spend our time on the FIS program. Get senior leadership buy-in.

### **Actions**

Address section 401 of MSA with new PSG. This section can be their charter.

Look at revising / revisiting PSGs to ensure they are aligned properly.

### **PSG Activity Reports**

#### **System Design and Integration - Tina Chang**

Tina included development of the FIS Roadmap and the FIS Portal as accomplishments of this group. Work needs include data management and policy, inventory (metadata), an FIS project plan, and data quality act. Obstacles include the potential for lack of data entry into systems. Risks include lack of participation, inadequate resources and time, and lack of communication.

It was mentioned that metadata is the driver of the roadmap. Therefore, it is crucial that the metadata tool and steps in the roadmap are in sync.

Someone asked about the previous push for online permits, and if there has been any effort to bring together regional online permit systems. This question was referred to the permit PSG.

It was asked how databases are linked. We need an inventory of databases first; metadata describing what's out there rather than data about columns and formats.

### **Permits/Participant Reporting - Steve Koplin**

The objectives/accomplishments of the group are as follows: Set up links to other agencies. Perform in-house cleanup to resolve inconsistencies. Set up a "Do Not Permit" table of vessels that have given up their right to fish (through buyout). PRA consolidation. Compiled list of data elements. Permit cost issues. Cleanup of existing systems.

It was asked if the system will allow for identification of vessels with multiple permits. This is the design of the system.

What is the function of the PSG? Inventory first.

### **Data Reconciliation - John Poffenberger**

#### **1. Accomplishments**

Developed a survey to solicit information 9 responses from AK and SW), SOW for PSG contract developed for systems analysis documentation

#### **2. What key work needs to be done**

Perform follow-up when reconciliation data is collected, build system that identifies commonalties and differences between trip tickets and logbooks, contract to be awarded by CASC in August, continue forward with PSG

#### **3. Obstacles**

Not much response to survey, funding process, don't have a way of combining logbook and trip ticket data, confidentiality issues from the various states

#### **4. Potential risks, looking forward: Contractor could fail; lack of cooperation; need to do something about logbook program; metadata should be done first**

### **Electronic Reporting - Doug Turnbull**

How will duplicative effort be handled? Will be identified by PSG and used to encourage collaboration. Not all proposals will be funded.

How does industry feel about electronic reporting? Outreach has not been conducted yet. Experience suggests that industry is ahead of the IT game. Some proposals were from the Councils at the suggestion of industry.

### **Economic Data Management - Rita Curtis**

Review of funded projects (9 total)

Is there a list of types of economic data being collected? Currently building a website that will inventory datasets. Is being delayed by PRA issues.

Are integration activities being coordinated with other PSGs? This is being conducted at regions.

## PSG Meeting Summaries

After the general meeting, five PSGs held breakout sessions. Each group met for a few hours and reported back to the whole group:

### John Witzig provided a summary of the SDI PSG meeting.

This PSG reviewed the goals of FIS and looked at the objectives under the road map then ranked the FIS goals. The following results shows the FIS goal weights as far as importance and priorities: with Goal 1 (Facilitate coordination and communication...) receiving 25% of the "votes" and Goal 3 (Build cross-regional and national tools...) 24%. The PSG determined that Goal 1 was really operational and thought it should be an administrative function (?). Of the three objectives under Goal 3, the top-ranked objective was metadata collection. The PSG also thought that standardized data collection was a high priority. The PSG thought that each definition and each sentence in the Goals needed to be clear.

The outcomes from the team ranking of FIS Goals and Objectives are as follows:

### SDI group voted on FIS **Goal Priorities**:

**Goal 1: Facilitate coordination and communication in the design, collection, sharing, and uses of data among states, regional/state repositories, and NMFS to support fisheries stewardship.**

**Votes: 68**      **Goal 1 Priority by vote: 1**

**Goal 3: Build cross-regional and national tools to support data collection and metadata activities at the Regions and Centers**

**Votes: 61**      **Goal 3 Priority by vote: 2**

**Goal 6: Improve data quality and reduce respondent burden by avoiding duplication and unnecessary redundancy in data collection.**

**Votes: 44**      **Goal 6 Priority by vote: 3**

**Goal 2: Consolidate information collected under existing State, Federal, and international fishery management plans.**

**Votes: 32**      **Goal 2 Priority by vote: 4**

**Goal 4: Develop a unified electronic data management system that provides fisheries information across NMFS Regions and partnerships.**

**Votes: 29**      **Goal 4 Priority by vote: 5**

**Goal 5: *Expand data collection to meet future needs.***

**Votes: 8**      **Goal 5 Priority by vote: 6**

**SDI group voted on FIS over all Objective Priorities under each goal (These priorities were defined in the Roadmap strawman. Please refer to the Second Annual Meeting Handout):**

Objectives priority (3.1 means FIS Goal 3, objective 1. The number in the ( ) means priority):

- 3.1 Metadata team complete national metadata catalog system, **votes: 90 (1)**
- 5.1 Standardize data collection process, **votes: 52 (2)**
- 3.2 Develop FIS core data element requirements, **votes: 46 (3)**
- 3.3 Enter data elements to national metadata catalog system, **votes: 43 (4)**
- 2.1.1 Develop unified Vessel Registration System, **votes: 35 (5)**
- 5.2 Analyze data collection gaps, **votes: 33 (6)**
- 6.1 Identify duplicate data collection and reporting tools and develop redundancy document by end of Dec, **votes: 26 (7)**
- 2.1.2 Develop national data reconciliation system, **votes: 16 (8)**
- 6.2 Develop initial data collection and reporting tools document, **votes: 15 (9)**
- 5.3 Improve FIS data collection program, **votes: 5 (10)**

NOTE: These priorities do not necessarily means importance of goals, but combined with sequences too. Something may need to happen before another.

#### **Steve Koplin presented the Permits PSG meeting summary.**

The priorities of the PSG were: 1) an overview of the vessel ID system; 2) analysis of the data collection gaps – as in state license systems; 3) core data element requirements – realizing that there are specific elements that don't need to be national; 4) communication with the SDI PSG. The PSG was going to be looking at several things over the next several months including how federal dealer definitions differed from state definitions, how duplication should be addressed under standardized data collection, and how a central repository would work (e.g. the same individual could be in the repository in 5 different ways). The PSG identified one proposal that looked odd but was being rectified.

#### **Ken Ortiz presented the ER PSG meeting summary.**

A primary goal of the PSG was to improve data quality by eliminating duplication and redundancy. The PSG went through the proposals, and wanted to avoid duplicating effort in the proposals. The PSG thought it was important to enforce collaboration across the Regions. They also questioned whether the focus of the PSGs was correct. The ER PSG wanted to focus on electronic reporting – with the operative word being “electronic”. The PSG wanted to look at the results of Tom Fletcher's survey, and wanted a pool of IT experts as a basis of review of proposals. It is the determination of the group that the best proposals are those establishing

standards for electronic reporting. The PSG also suggested that vendors make presentations next year. Better titles should be provided to help distinguish proposals, and Will suggested that individual ID's be provided for each proposal. Finally, the PSG suggested that the Electronic Reporting/Data Collection PSG be broken into the Electronic Reporting PSG and the Data Collection PSG.

**John Poffenberger presented the Data Reconciliation PSG meeting summary.**

The PSG looked at all 6 abstracts, made recommendations, and discussed the proposals. Four of the proposals are follow-ons to the existing PSG contract, and would help develop the next phase of proposed work under this PSG. These proposals were seen as more valuable than the other two proposals.

**Larry Peruso presented the Economics PSG meeting summary.**

Four primary goals or achievements were identified by the PSG: 1) validate and enhance economic data to support the MSA and FMPs; 2) Facilitate transfer across regions; 3) projects were more valuable that integrated economic data across other PSGs – e.g. to link up with the SE Center, and to involve IT shops; 4) The economic PSG could deliver several short-term successes. For the future the PSG was going to further regional projects, and nationally was going to present FIS to national economists at a national meeting of economists this year.

After the PSG's working session report, Paul led a short discussion about the meeting:

**Summary Comments from PSG Sessions**

A list was made by the group as a whole of PSGs that could be added in the future: recreational fisheries; outreach and communication; ecosystem management; governance; data quality (quality assurance and quality control). In making the list it was suggested that the PSG names be less IT oriented. It was also suggested that PSGs can be temporary and could be disbanded over time.

**Conference Summary and Wrap Up**

Paul reviewed the efforts of the week. On Monday John provided a roadmap which engendered much conversation. It was apparent that many participants had not read the bluebook. There was discussion about what the term "national" meant. FIS was lacking governance and a governance working group was established. On Tuesday, Usha Varanasi provided welcoming comments. There were several presentations on background and real projects with demonstrations. Presentations were given by the partner communities (ACCSP, FISCUS, etc.). Business presentations, the Data Quality Act (DQA), and a presentation by Galen Tromble reviewing the events leading to the present were made on Wednesday. Design principals, criteria process and criteria were discussed and enumerated. Mukhya was in the process of condensing the long lists of proposal evaluation factors. Thursday PSGs met and their current activities were discussed.

Steve Freese provided information from an MSA reauthorization conference call. Bill Hogarth wanted open participation. It was suggested that a group from FIS form to provide input into the MSA reauthorization process. It was discussed that this could become a temporary PSG. The group could provide feedback to Congress. The PSG should be formed by the first week of September, and have weighed in on questions such as the definition of EFH, and Ecosystem. Also the group could provide perspective on what FIS was and how the MSA could be changed

to support FIS. The Councils were scheduled to meet in March to discuss the reauthorization. Interested participants included Witzig, Power, Sender, Donnelly, VanVorheese, Osborn, Freese.

**The following Action Items were established:**

- 1) develop and execute FIS governance framework (ST will draft, 2-3 wks);
- 2) establish /define project selection process for 05 funding (ST, by Sept. 15);
- 3) execute 05 project selection process (FIS governance);
- 4) submit FIS program management plan with crisp, clear messaging (Chang);
- 5) Determine if the PSG framework was sufficient (FIS governance, by Nov 1);
- 6) Engage OCIO in FIS program planning (Hogarth);
- 7) Engage directly, consistently with NOAA-wide mission area initiative (ST);
- 8) Execute 04 funding projects (Project managers – ongoing);
- 9) Start planning for 06,07 (PSGs and FIS governance - ongoing);
- 10) Provide substantive input to MSA reauthorization (Freese, Sept. 1);
- 11) Establish/abolish PSGs – what they will do and who will be on them (FIS governance, Nov 1);
- 12) Once InPort is completed, establish and execute the processes to populate it (Sender and Pappas – ongoing);
- 13) Execute Portal Project ASAP (Molina – ongoing).

Feedback on the workshop was provided to Paul. The FIS group provided the following: Paul was a great facilitator; plenty of opportunities to input ideas; it was a great way to meet all of the people involved and see presentations; shopping was good – picked up a lot of good learning; there was much buy-in in addition to what is already going on and on-going; glad and attorney was present – it allowed a broader perspective and cross-cutting of goals; positive energy!

Dave Van Voorhess expressed his appreciation that all invitees showed up, and that all stuck with it and participated.

Paul said that there were encouraging signs, and that it was good to be with faces from the past and with NOAA, especially with new blood in the organization. Paul thought that the FIS work was important – he had worked with FSSP and had helped get 13 states together to sign an MOU that became ACCSP. Paul had high praise for Tina. He thanked Tina for her dedication to the program and working with the team making the FIS alive.

Tina wrapped up by saying that to be successful, FIS would need everyone's help. It was a team effort and to make the meeting productive required someone like Paul to keep it organized. To Tina this meeting was a turning point. Tina gave thanks to all of the individuals who had helped including Tim Haverland, Gary Shaw, the Project teams, the presenters, the recorders, Glen for the AV help, Susan and Rita for lunch, and the drivers.

Tina pointed out that after this meeting there was a need to keep working on FIS – especially the Action Items. She hoped that everyone knew how to participate in the PSGs now, and what to do next. She encouraged everyone to please check the website and review proposals. She was glad that everyone was excited about the projects and urged everyone to keep in good communication. She indicated that after meeting, the team would look into the action items defined in the FIS meeting and would set up with core team and PSG follow up meetings. She wanted all PSG chairs and co-chairs to continue with their current duties and responsibilities to

lead the team. She encouraged everyone to look at the bigger picture of the FIS, continue to make commitment, and work with the HQ team for the full implementation of this important national program.

Meeting was adjourned.